

MINECRAFT



Rise of Online Gaming

Although Minecraft is not available through Steam. Steam is an example of how the gaming industry has been revolutionized with a drive towards online gaming.

What is Steam and how has it changed the industry?



What is
Steam?



Risk

SAFE GENRES MAKE MONEY (RPG, FPS & CMS games)
MINECRAFT IS A CONSTRUCTION GAME - OPEN WORLD
SETTINGS



1. Created and developed by Swedish based Mojang Studios. Minecraft's Swedish creator, Markus "Notch" Persson started creating the game in May of 2009
2. Minecraft is a sandbox game. A game free of structure and constraint; players are free to roam and make choices about how they use available content. Sandbox games are often described as having open world settings.
3. In 2014, Microsoft acquired Minecraft intellectual property for \$2.5 billion. In 2015, it reached 30 million copies sold. To date, over 121 official copies of the game have been sold across a variety of formats and platforms.
4. Versions of the game can be purchased over the internet using such outlets the Playstation Network or Xbox Live Arcade. Recent additions include the Nintendo platform which was excluded from the initial Minecraft releases; available to download from December 2015 with physical copies from June 2016 and most recently for Nintendo Switch (May 2017) and Nintendo 3DS (download only from September 2017). The Minecraft: Story Mode - A Telltale Games series is also available via Steam.
5. Feb 2017 - 55 million registered users
6. reception: On its release, the game won five awards at three conferences, including an Innovation Award, Best Debut Game, Best Downloadable Game, Audience Award and Seumas McNally Grand Prize.



What are the 6 reasons given for Minecraft being popular?

By 2011, with Minecraft being developed among the gaming community, Persson and Mojang, had a game with exponential global growth but no commercial backing from a mainstream publisher.

The game relied on word of mouth among gamers. For many media companies this would not typically enable growth.



The power of the internet

Penny Arcade - Gaming Forums



Social Context: Online fan communities were important for the development and success of the game.



BETA Version

Beta was the sixth and the final development phase that succeeded **Alpha** and preceded Minecraft 1.0, and was the fifth and final Minecraft development stage to have some of its versions released to the public.

Beta testing allowed the online gaming community to provide feedback to Notch and enabled the game to be improved.

This makes Minecraft a bottom up product - the audience were actively involved in the production and development of the game.



Oligopoly

A state of limited competition

USA vs China & Japan

The **gaming** console market has long been dominated by the top three firms of Nintendo, Sony, and Microsoft.

The Nintendo logo, featuring the word "Nintendo" in white, bold, sans-serif font inside a white rounded rectangle, which is set against a solid red background.The Sony logo, consisting of the word "SONY" in white, bold, sans-serif font centered on a solid black rectangular background.

Microsoft

From BETA to Sony

In November 2011, prior to the game's official release, Minecraft had over 16 million registered users and 4 million purchases.

Its popularity enabled Notch (Persson) to strike a deal with Sony who went on to distribute the game. This commercial deal helped secure Minecraft's place in the video game market.

- ★ It was released on multiple platforms and increased audience interactivity
- ★ It was packaged as a game brand for a wider global audience and not just video gamers.



Minecraft & Sony - The Impact

Why was distributing Minecraft a good move for Sony? *Consider the ownership of Sony and the video game market - what countries dominate the market and what conglomerates originate from there? Level of risk and revenue streams.*



Commercial Success

Notch knew that with the backing of technology companies they could provide him with the multiple digital platforms to distribute the game - ultimately to reach all the non-gamers now using mobile digital devices.

This was enabled due to media convergence.





The progress of Minecraft after 2011 as a global success is illustrated below;

- By 2011 Minecraft was available from Xbox 360 and Xbox Live
- In 2013 Minecraft:Pi Edition, which was mean for educational purposes for novice programmers and players, was also released
- In 2014, Microsoft acquired Minecraft intellectual property
- In 2015, Minecraft reached 30 million copies sold. To date over 121 million have been sold across a variety of formats and platforms
- By 2017, Minecraft was the second most successful video game of all time.

As small independent products become successful, *it is usual for larger organisations / owners to want to buy them.*

Before Minecraft was purchased by Microsoft Mojang had struck deals with Sony and Nintendo. Both two multinational conglomerates that are part of the oligopoly that dominate the gaming industry.

**Why would Microsoft be keen to purchase
Minecraft?**

Research what impact Microsoft and evolving media technology had on Minecraft and where it might go in the future.

What are the different versions / modes of Minecraft available

What are Realms & how does this enhance gameplay

What is the Minecraft Marketplace

What is Twitch TV and What is crossplay

What can you find out about the platforms that Minecraft is available on

What can you find out about the potential future of Minecraft

How media producers target, attract, reach, address and potentially construct audiences.

Minecraft and subsequent versions and variations of the game offers familiar pleasures to existing fans (narrative features, open world gameplay etc.) along with new elements to target a wider audience (e.g. Story Mode). The creation of Minecraft Realms was a well-considered way to attract and encourage audiences to use the game on dedicated servers and increase subscription revenues. There already exists an established network of fans across the internet who share game footage, tutorials, mods and hacks so that gamers can get new experiences from the game.

How audiences interact with the media and can be actively involved in media production.

The establishment of Minecraft Marketplace is a great example of the industry listening to their audiences (fans) and allowing the trade of different maps, textures and 'add ons' in a legitimate setting. The nature of the game has also allowed audiences to learn new skills, such as programming.

There are several prosumers on YouTube and across blogs who have their own dedicated channels discussing Minecraft, offering tutorials or who just want to show off their gameplay or promote their own maps.

YouTube, Facebook and online fan communities has enabled Minecraft's audience to have an active voice in its ongoing production through detailed feedback and commentary on modifications and beta tests. There are several niche forums across the internet.

Audiences shape the way the game evolves

User generated content is monitored by the game host in terms of;

- Downloads
- Audience reception online through social media

Updates to the game and even the development of Minecraft Realms demonstrates how audience interaction clearly affects the way the game is developed.

Fandom

The continued development of fan made media across social media platforms and dedicated fan sites and blogs means that there is an active community of gamers who share a common interest linked to Minecraft. This can include groups such as The Yogcast <http://yogscast.com/> who regularly produce videos that collectively have billions of views. Future conventions are expected to take place online as the demand and attraction of the game shows no sign of deteriorating (November 2017).

Fan made clones of the game are now ubiquitous across marketplace apps and various merchandise (both official and fan made) is available to purchase online. A series of books and magazines have also begun to appear after a deal with the Egmont Group.

Small group activity

How has Minecraft been marketed and how has it developed a franchise?





Pegi7

(Sonia Livingstone and Peter Lunt)

New technologies (*in this case the convergent devices with access to internet, Bluetooth, etc.*) opens up opportunities and risks that complicate regulation. What might these be?





Is regulation pointless at 7+ as inappropriate content is user generated ?